

## REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 through 7, 10 and 16 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as described by the examiner. Claims 11 through 15 are allowed and claims 8 and 9 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the matter of claim 8 and claim 8 has been canceled. Claim 1 should now be allowable.

Claim 9 has been amended to be dependent on claim 1, it was originally dependent on claim 8, and therefore should be allowed.

Claims 2 through 7, 10 and 16 are now dependent on what is believed to be an allowable base claim 1 and therefore should be allowed.

It is believed with the amendments that the uniqueness of the instant invention is not disclosed in the cited art.

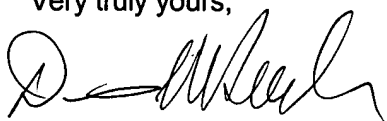
Accordingly it is believed that the objections have been overcome by amending of the claims and the remarks, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the cause for rejections and objections is requested. Allowance of claims 1 through 7 and 9 through 16 is earnestly solicited.

No additional fee for claims is seen to be required.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,



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DWB/ab



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In regards to application of:

Serial Number: 10/645,167  
Applicant: Scott McCuan, et al.  
Filing Date: 08-20-2003  
Title: Circular Conduit Opening Closure Device  
TC/AU: 3671  
Examiner: Pechhold, Alexandra K.

Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

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